COLL 176: Comparative Global Cities

Course Information

Class hours: Mondays, 7-8p

Instructor info: Chris Keller, Senior, Political Science, ckell@rice.edu, 941-302-8137

Course Overview

Cities are one of the defining features of humankind – the centers of global commerce, governance, information exchange, the arts and much, much more. In an increasingly globalized world, cities now more than ever must compete with one another to succeed. In an era when people can live anywhere, and distance and industrial production matter less and less, cities need to develop new ways to attract and develop creative, productive citizens in order to sustain themselves. There are many different ways of looking at what makes a "global" city and this course strives to encompass as many of these perspectives as possible, drawing from guest lecturers and the interest-driven research of the students.

The course will be taught using a "case study" approach, with a new city analyzed each class. The course will include a brief historical development of each city and the steps each city, and its people, took to attain global status. The main framework in this course for analyzing how "global" a city is in the twenty-first century will consist of five components:

(1) *Business activity*, including GDP, financial markets, and the number of Fortune 500 companies.

(2) *Human capital*, including immigrant population, number of top-tier universities, and the educational level of the city's population.

(3) *Information exchange*, specifically the number of international news agencies, the level of media censorship, and access to news and the Internet.

(4) *Cultural experiences*, from sports to food to the arts, and much more.

(5) *Global influence*, such as the number of embassies and consulates the city hosts, as well as the number of major research institutes and international organizations.

The course will also incorporate specific policy areas and challenges in each city, depending on the city, the expressed interests of the students, and the news stories presented by the students (see "Assignments and Grading" below). Students are encouraged to contribute their own perspectives on any and all aspects of a specific city or of cities and urban studies in general, both inside and outside of class.

Course Materials

Selections from the following books and publications:

- Brenner, Neil and Roger Keil. "The Global Cities Reader." New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Glaeser, Edward. *Triumph of the City*. New York: Penguin, 2011.
- Palen, J John. *The Urban World*. Boulder: Paradigm, 2008.
- Sassen, Saskia. *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.
- Foreign Policy's Global Cities Index, 2010: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/08/11/the_global_cities_index_2010
- "State of the World's Cities 2010-2011: Bridging the Urban Divide". *United Nations Human Settlement Program (UN-HABITAT)*: http://www.unhabitat.org/
- City-specific readings, videos and links will be posted on OWL-Space.

Assignments and Grading

50% Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to come to class having reviewed all assigned readings and/or viewings. Each class will include time for discussion and students will be graded on active participation. Students are allowed one (1) unexcused absence. Students should contact the instructor regarding excused absences for things such as illness, interviews, club events, etc, although students cannot miss more than two (2) classes and still pass the class.

15% Urban News

Each student will be expected to present a news article on one city of their choice the week that specific city is covered in class. News articles should be no more than six weeks old. Presentations should be no more than 2-3 minutes in length, and should include a summary of the article and an expression of how that news item relates to the themes of the course.

35% Final Group Presentation

Each student will create a 15-minute presentation with up to three other members of the class on a city of their choice. The presentation should analyze the city in a manner similar to that of the weekly lectures, including a brief historical sketch of the city and, most importantly, an analysis of how the city of interest compares to the other "global" metropolises studied in the course in terms of the five measurements of a modern "global" city (see "Course Overview" above for more information). Students are highly encouraged to include perspectives of personal interest as well, such as representations of the city in art and literature, public policy challenges, urban engineering, architecture, etc. Powerpoint, video, and interactive presentations are encouraged.

Honor Code

Students are encouraged to discuss the course and collaborate on assignments outside of class, although submitting identical assignments and other obvious violations of the Rice Honor Code are not permitted. Students should contact the instructor with specific questions about the Honor Code. More information can be found at http://honor.rice.edu/

Special Needs and Accommodations

A student with a documented disability seeking academic adjustments or accommodations should speak with the instructor as soon as possible. All such discussions will remain confidential. Students should also contact Disability Support Services in the Allen Center.

Weekly Schedule: Spring 2013

Please note that the specific cities may vary per week based on guest speaker availability and current events.

Week	Class Overview
1	7 January – Introduction to "comparative global cities," framework for analyzing cities in a global context, review course syllabus.
2	14 January – Perspectives on Global Cities Research Guest speaker: Dr Michael Emerson, the Allyn & Gladys Cline Professor of Sociology and Co-Director of the Kinder Institute for Urban Research
3	21 January – Martin Luther King Jr Day (no class)
4	28 January – New York: Empire City
5	4 February – "It's Hot!": The Special Case of Houston Guest speaker: Dr Stephen Klineberg, Professor of Sociology and Co-Director of the Kinder Institute for Urban Research
6	11 February – London: The World's First Metropolis
7	18 February – Paris: City of Light
8	25 February – Spring Break (no class)
9	4 March – Tokyo: Queen of the Tigers
10	11 March – Hong Kong: Pearl of the Orient
11	18 March – Rio de Janeiro: Marvelous City
12	25 March – Istanbul: Capital of the World Guest speaker: Dr Melissa Marschall, the Albert Thomas Associate Professor of Political Science and Faculty Sponsor of COLL 176
13	1 April – Dubai: City of Gold Guest speaker: Dr Michael Emerson, the Allyn & Gladys Cline Professor of Sociology and Co-Director of the Kinder Institute for Urban Research
14	8 April – Group presentations on city of choice
15	15 April – Group presentations on city of choice, dissent, course conclusion